

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 22193 011735Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-07 IO-13 EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07 FEAE-00

ERDA-05 EURE-00 /104 W

-----032743 011745Z /47

P R 011650Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6456

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ROME

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USEEC

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, ENRG, PINS, FR

SUBJECT: VISIT OF PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING TO

NUCLEAR FACILITY AT PIERRELATTE

REF: (A) PARIS 14112; (B) PARIS 22025

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. UNDERLINING A STRONG INDEPENDENT FRENCH NUCLEAR ENERGY POLICY, PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING VISITED THE NUCLEAR FACILITY AT PIERRELATTE ON JULY 29 JUST PRIOR TO THE LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS SCHEDULED FOR THE NEXT DAY. PRINCIPAL POINTS OF POLICY AND HIS REJECTION OF THE SOCIALIST CALL FOR A REFERENDUM WERE MADE CLEAR DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH FOLLOWED HIS VISIT. DETAILS OF HIS STATEMENTS, FRENCH PRESS REACTION AND EMBASSY COMMENTS ARE INCLUDED. SUMMARY AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF MANIFESTATION OF JULY 30 ARE COVERED IN A SEPARATE CABLE. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 PARIS 22193 011735Z

2. DURING THE AFTERNOON OF JULY 29, PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING, ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER OF INDUSTRY MONORY AND ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FRENCH ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION GIRAUD, TOURED THE MILITARY AND CIVIL NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS AT PIERRELATTE, THE PLANT SITE FOR SUPER PHENIX. FOLLOWING THE VISIT HE SUBMITTED TO QUESTIONS OF TELEVISION, RADIO AND PRESS.

3. MAIN POINTS COVERED DURING Q AND A PERIOD FOLLOW:

A) FRENCH NUCLEAR POLICY IS BASED ON THREE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF INDEPENDENCE, SECURITY AND RESPONSIBILITY. HE STRESSED THAT BOTH DEFENSE AND ENERGY INDEPENDENCE WERE INVOLVED. CURRENT RESOURCES COVER ONLY A QUARTER OF FRENCH NEEDS AND HE STATED THAT FRANCE HAS NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE THAN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR POWER.

B) GOVERNMENT POLICY IS TO PRODUCE ELECTRO-NUCLEAR ENERGY WITH FRENCH INDUSTRY TO THE LIMITS COMPATIBLE WITH SECURITY REQUIREMENTS AND PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT. THE PLAN IS TO INCREASE ELECTRICITY GENERATED BY NUCLEAR PLANTS FROM 4,000 MW (TEN PERCENT OF CURRENT POWER REQUIREMENTS) TO 40,000 MW. IT WAS NOTED THAT THE US IS ALREADY PRODUCING 45,000 MW OF NUCLEAR POWER AND THAT THERE ARE 200 NUCLEAR PLANTS IN THE WORLD.

C) RESPONDING TO A PROPOSAL MADE EARLIER IN THE WEEK BY SOCIALIST LEADER MITTERAND, THE PRESIDENT REJECTED (ON CONSTITUTIONAL GROUNDS) A NATIONAL REFERENDUM ON NUCLEAR ENERGY. HE STATED THAT THE SUBJECTS ON WHICH A REFERENDUM IS POSSIBLE ARE SPECIFICALLY LIMITED BY THE CONSTITUTION AND DO NOT INCLUDE MATTERS OF THIS TYPE.

D) NOTING THAT ONE MUST NOT TREAT SECURITY PROBLEMS LIGHTLY, HE INDICATED HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD PROCEED BETWEEN NOW AND THE END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PARIS 22193 011735Z

OF THE YEAR TO REEXAMINE ALL SAFETY REGULATIONS AND EQUIPMENT NOW IN USE OR FORESEEN FOR THEIR ELECTRO-NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM.

E) RELATIVE TO ANTI-NUCLEAR DEMONSTRATIONS THE PRESIDENT STATED THAT FOR THE DEMONSTRATORS, NUCLEAR ENERGY RELATES TO THE ATOM BOMB. HE ADDED THAT THE EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT IS A VERY COMPLEX PROBLEM BUT THAT EVEN THE USE OF COAL POSES SERIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS.

F) HE CONCLUDED BY STRESSING THAT FRANCE IS ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR ARMS.

4. A SUMMARY OF PARISIAN PRESS REACTION TO THE ABOVE VISIT AND STATEMENTS FOLLOWS.

A) QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS (LEFT) - A NATIONAL DEBATE MUST TAKE PLACE TO STUDY ALL SOURCES OF CLEAR ENERGY VERY CAREFULLY BEFORE DEFINING THE EXACT SHARE OF NUCLEAR IN THE SUPPLY OF ENERGY FOR THE COUNTRY.

B) L'AUREORE (RIGHT) - FRANCE IN ANY CASE CANNOT GIVE UP ITS

NUCLEAR EFFORT. SECURITY DEVICES WILL BE CLOSELY REVISED. IF THE CREYS-MALVILLE PILGRIMS WERE CHIEFLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE THREAT REPRESENTED BY THE PROLIFERATION OF PLUTONIUM BOMBS, THEIR MOVEMENT WOULD NOT BE CRITICIZED.

C) LE FIGARO (RIGHT) - ACCORDING TO THE OPINION OF SOME SCIENTISTS, BREEDERS HAVE NOT YET PROVED THEMSELVES AND TODAY'S DEMONSTRATION SHOWS THAT NUCLEAR OPPONENTS ARE NOT IMPRESSED BY FRANCE'S TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCE IN THIS FIELD.

D) LE MATIN (LEFT) - BECAUSE OF ITS COMPLEXITIES, NUCLEAR ENERGY IS MAINTAINED IN A CONFUSED AND SECRET STATE BY AUTHORITIES WHEREAS IT IS A CHOICE OF SOCIETY.

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PAGE 04 PARIS 22193 011735Z

E) ROUTE (EXTREME LEFT) - IT IS ONLY THROUGH THE UNION OF ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENTS AND WORKERS' ORGANIZATIONS THAT THE FRENCH ELECTRO-NUCLEAR PROGRAM CAN BE BLOCKED.

F) L'HUMANITE (COMMUNIST) - THE ECOLOGY MOVEMENT DOES NOT HAVE THE MONOPOLY IN PROTESTING THE PRESENT GROWTH RATE.

G) LIBERATION (EXTREME LEFT) - SUPER PHENIX IS THE SYMBOL OF A MORE CENTRALIZED SOCIETY AND THE BEGINNING OF A TOTALITARIAN CONSUMER SOCIETY.

5. COMMENT: THE VISIT AND STATEMENTS OF PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING SERVE TO EMPHASIZE THE CONTINUING FRENCH EFFORTS FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT APPROACH TO NUCLEAR AND DEFENSE POLICY. HIS STATEMENTS ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE FRENCH NUCLEAR POLICY PREVIOUSLY REPORTED IN REF A.HARTMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PARIS22193
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770275-0292
Format: TEL
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197708110/aaaadpxh.tel
Line Count: 152
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 PARIS 14112, 77 PARIS 22025
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1433865
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING TO NUCLEAR FACILITY AT PIERRELATTE
TAGS: TECH, ENRG, PINS, FR, (GISCARD D'ESTAING, VALERY)
To: STATE USEEC
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/13132250-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009